

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TAMPA BAY AREA - RUSKIN FL
600 AM EDT THU MAY 29 2008

...HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS WEEK CONTINUES...
...TODAY'S TOPIC...MARINE SAFETY...

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE HAS DECLARED THE WEEK OF MAY 25TH THROUGH MAY 31ST AS HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS WEEK. EACH DAY THIS WORK WEEK, YOUR NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE IN RUSKIN FLORIDA, WILL ISSUE A BRIEF STATEMENT HIGHLIGHTING THE MOST IMPORTANT HURRICANE HAZARDS, AS WELL AS IMPORTANT PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION AND ACTIONS TO TAKE WHEN WATCHES OR WARNINGS ARE ISSUED.

THE SCHEDULE CONTINUES AS FOLLOWS...

TODAY....MAY 29TH.....MARINE SAFETY.
FRIDAY...MAY 30TH.....PREPAREDNESS AND ACTION PLANS.

...OVERVIEW...
HURRICANES HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE OF MANY MARITIME DISASTERS AND UNFORTUNATELY THERE IS NO SINGLE RULE OF THUMB THAT CAN BE USED TO ENSURE SAFE SEPARATION FROM A HURRICANE AT SEA. RATHER, CONSTANT MONITORING OF THE STORM'S POTENTIAL AND CONTINUAL ANALYSIS OF RISK ARE PARAMOUNT IN MINIMIZING A HURRICANE'S IMPACT TO VESSELS AT SEA OR IN PORT.

...CLIMATOLOGY...
HURRICANE CLIMATOLOGY IS AN IMPORTANT GUIDE FOR MARINE PLANNING. HOWEVER, IT MUST BE NOTED THAT DEADLY STORMS CAN OCCUR ANYTIME DURING THE HURRICANE SEASON.

FOR THE EASTERN GULF OF MEXICO, TROPICAL CYCLONE DEVELOPMENT IS FAVORABLE AS EARLY AS JUNE. THOUGH THE SYSTEMS TEND TO BE WEAK, THEY CAN DEVELOP QUICKLY AND CATCH MARINERS OFF GUARD AS THE SEASON IS YOUNG AND PREPAREDNESS PLANS MAY NOT BE FULLY IN PLACE.

RELATIVE ACTIVITY TENDS TO LULL IN JULY AND AUGUST. BY SEPTEMBER, BOTH THE GULF AND CAPE VERDE SEASONS ARE IN FULL SWING. HOWEVER, SOME OF THE MORE NOTABLE STORMS OF THE 20TH CENTURY ALONG FLORIDA'S WEST COAST OCCURRED IN OCTOBER, WHEN THE PREDOMINANT STORM BREEDING GROUNDS EXTEND FROM THE SOUTHERN GULF INTO THE EXTREME WESTERN CARIBBEAN SEA.

...MARINE IMPACTS AND THE 2007 HURRICANE SEASON...
NIGHT AND DAY WOULD BEST DESCRIBE THE IMPACTS OF THE 2006 AND 2007 SEASONS COMPARED WITH THAT OF 2004 AND 2005. ONLY TROPICAL STORM BARRY CAUSED A NOTABLE IMPACT, AND THAT VERY EARLY IN THE SEASON. CLEAR SAILING FOLLOWED, WITH ONLY HURRICANE DEAN TRAVELLING THROUGH THE NORTHWEST CARIBBEAN PROVIDING SOME SWELL AS IT MADE LANDFALL OVER THE YUCATAN PENINSULA.

BARRY'S STRONGEST WINDS CAME EARLY ON THE 2ND AS THE CYCLONE WAS NEARING ITS LANDFALL POINT IN TAMPA BAY. AT THIS TIME, POTENT FEEDER BANDS PRODUCED SUSTAINED TWO MINUTE WINDS BETWEEN 20 AND 30 KNOTS WITH GUSTS BETWEEN 30 AND 40 KNOTS. LITTLE TO NO BEACH EROSION WAS NOTED ALONG THE SUNCOAST FROM MANATEE TO PINELLAS COUNTY.

A QUIET SEASON SUCH AS 2007 FURTHER EMPHASIZES THE NEED TO REMAIN VIGILANT AND PREPARED FOR POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS MARINE WEATHER IN 2008 AND BEYOND. THE ACTIVE 2004 AND 2005 SEASONS TAUGHT VALUABLE LESSONS ABOUT HOW HIGH THE SEAS IN THE GULF CAN BUILD WITH A LARGE CATEGORY 3 OR GREATER CYCLONE, AS BOTH KATRINA AND IVAN HAD MAXIMUM SEA HEIGHTS IN EXCESS OF 45 FEET AND THOSE STORMS, AS WELL AS RITA, WILMA, AN DENNIS TO NAME A FEW HAD SEAS IN EXCESS OF 30 FEET IN THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN GULF.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE SEASONS AND THEIR IMPACTS, GO TO [HTTP://HURRICANES.GOV](http://hurricanes.gov) AND SCROLL TO "SEASONS ARCHIVES" ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR.

...AVOIDANCE GUIDELINES...

MARINERS SHOULD BE VERY FAMILIAR WITH HURRICANE FORECASTING LIMITATIONS BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISIONS SUCH AS REMAINING IN PORT OR SAILING OUT OF HARM'S WAY.

THE FOLLOWING TIPS SHOULD BE USED BY MARINERS WHEN EVALUATING A STORM'S POTENTIAL:

* 34 KNOT RULE: AVOID THE 34 KNOT WIND FIELD AT ALL COSTS. 34 KNOTS IS CRITICAL BECAUSE THE ASSOCIATED SEA STATES CAN QUICKLY REDUCE A VESSEL'S NAVIGABILITY.

*1-2-3 RULE: THESE ARE THE MINIMUM RECOMMENDED DISTANCES TO MAINTAIN FROM A HURRICANE, BASED ON TYPICAL FORECAST ERROR RADIUS.

RULE 1: 100 MILE ERROR RADIUS/24 HOUR FORECAST;

RULE 2: 200 MILE ERROR RADIUS/48 HOUR FORECAST;

RULE 3: 300 MILE ERROR RADIUS/72 HOUR FORECAST.

*NEVER CROSS THE T: NEVER PLAN TO CROSS THE TRACK OF A HURRICANE. SUDDEN ACCELERATIONS IN HURRICANE MOTION CAN ULTIMATELY PLACE A VESSEL IN HARROWING CONDITIONS, EVENTUALLY RESULTING IN DISASTER.

*CALCULATE THE CLOSEST POINT OF APPROACH (CPA): AN INCREASE IN THE CPA BETWEEN THE VESSEL AND THE HURRICANE SHOULD INCREASE CONFIDENCE IN AVOIDANCE PLANS. HOWEVER, A DECREASE IN THE CPA SHOULD BE DEALT WITH THE GREATEST URGENCY.

*PORT DEPARTURE DECISIONS: PLANNING TO LEAVE A PORT TO EVADE A HURRICANE MUST BE MADE VERY EARLY. TIME VERSUS DISTANCE PLAYS THE MOST IMPORTANT ROLE. REMEMBER, THE RISK OF VESSEL DAMAGE INCREASES AS THE MOTION OF THE STORM INCREASES TOWARD THE MAXIMUM SAFE SPEED OF THE VESSEL LEAVING PORT. THERE ARE DOCUMENTED CASES WHEN SHIPS HAVE MADE THE CORRECT DECISION TO LEAVE PORT, BUT SUSTAINED DAMAGE OR WERE LOST BECAUSE THE DECISION WAS MADE TOO LATE.

*BERTHING AND SHELTER REQUIREMENTS: DECISIONS TO REMAIN IN PORT MUST FACTOR IN THE PROTECTION AFFORDED BY THE PORT GIVEN A WORST CASE SCENARIO. THE DECISION TO BE TIED PIER SIDE, ANCHORED AT THE PORT, OR ANCHORED WELL INLAND SHOULD BE MADE WITH REGARD TO THE FORECAST STRENGTH OF THE WIND AS WELL AS ANY STORM SURGE. DEVASTATING DAMAGE TO BOATS WAS SEEN AT PORTS ALONG HURRICANE HUGO'S PATH IN 1989.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONSULT THE FOLLOWING WEB SITES (IN LOWER CASE,
EXCEPT WHERE NOTED):

HURRICANE AWARENESS WEEK, MARINE SAFETY:
[HTTP://WWW.NHC.NOAA.GOV/HAW2/ENGLISH/MARINE_SAFETY.SHTML](http://WWW.NHC.NOAA.GOV/HAW2/ENGLISH/MARINE_SAFETY.SHTML)

** PLEASE TYPE HAW2 IN UPPER CASE **

MARINER'S GUIDE TO HURRICANE AWARENESS:
[HTTP://WWW.NHC.NOAA.GOV/HAW2/PDF/MARINERSGUIDE.PDF](http://WWW.NHC.NOAA.GOV/HAW2/PDF/MARINERSGUIDE.PDF)

** PLEASE TYPE HAW2 IN UPPER CASE **

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE VOLUNTARY OBSERVING SHIP (VOS) PROGRAM:
[HTTP://WWW.VOS.NOAA.GOV](http://WWW.VOS.NOAA.GOV)

COAST GUARD STORM CENTER:
[HTTP://WWW.USCG.MIL/NEWS/STORMCENTER/](http://WWW.USCG.MIL/NEWS/STORMCENTER/)

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TAMPA BAY - RUSKIN:
[HTTP://WEATHER.GOV/TAMPABAY](http://WEATHER.GOV/TAMPABAY)

NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER:
[HTTP://HURRICANES.GOV](http://HURRICANES.GOV)

NEXT UP, PREPAREDNESS AND ACTION PLANS (FRIDAY).